



Junior Caitlyn Zeller greets spectators from the window of her Cinderella carriage during the DHS Prom Saturday.

Photo by Deni Johnson

Prom Time: It's Planes, Trains & Lawnmowers

By AMY ROLLINS

It's not every day one sees a sequin-clad prom date riding to the high school on a lawnmower, but Duxbury residents have come to expect anything from their high school prom-goers.

This year was no different as students rode in on everything from German sports cars to horse-drawn, and even people-drawn, carriages.

Since the late 1980's, crowds have gathered at the high school on prom day to watch the procession of high school students into the school. The prom's origins began at the

old high school in the 1940's as a formal event where official partners were assigned to each of the students. Dr. Donald Burgoyne, chairman of the 1964 prom committee, remembers decorating for the prom in the high school gym in the building which is now the middle school. "I think our theme that year was *April in Paris*. We did everything ourselves," Burgoyne said.

During the 1970's and early 1980's, the prom moved to such locations as Sisto's in Brockton and was occasionally held on

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Cape Cod. But, in 1986, after several tragic traffic accidents, parents, the school committee, and the drug/alcohol awareness committee, decided that keeping the prom close to home was safer and more convenient for the students. The 1986 prom marked its return to the high school gymnasium.

Lisa Smith and Ellen O'Connell, prom coordinators from 1988 to 2000, began to help create the prom tradition that once again places the prom decisions in the hands of the students. An elected, three-person prom committee, led this year by Junior Kendra McFadden, makes almost every decision regarding the details of the prom. "We decide on the theme, the music, the food, the



By land or by sea, DHS students this year found a fitting transport to be "Jammin' in Jamaica" on a trailered motorboat.

Burgoyne's daughter, Meghan, prom queen in 1998, said of prom day in Duxbury, "It was always a huge deal for me—an all day event. I remember being little and just waiting all day until I could go down and watch the big kids walk into the

ferred spectators something a bit special. Drawing a crew from Boston's WCVB, Channel 5 News, the prom boasted several unorthodox means of transportation. An ambulance, a trolley, and a lawn mower arrived alongside model T cars, and limousines. "That year, we made it a superlative for the Prom Court, Best Transportation," Smith said. "Kids are coming up with their own creative solutions to not driving, which is great."

Since 1994, DHS juniors, seniors and their guests have wrought their brains to come up with newer and more creative means of transportation. Parents and community members who come out in numbers to support the students are often shocked and entertained by the student's transportation. This



Students arrive in a 1950's era MG as the delighted crowd looks

decorations...pretty much everything," McFadden said.

Smith is happy to help the students with their efforts, "For the kids, planning is more than half the fun. The students enjoy creating their prom at the high school because they can really participate and make it more meaningful."

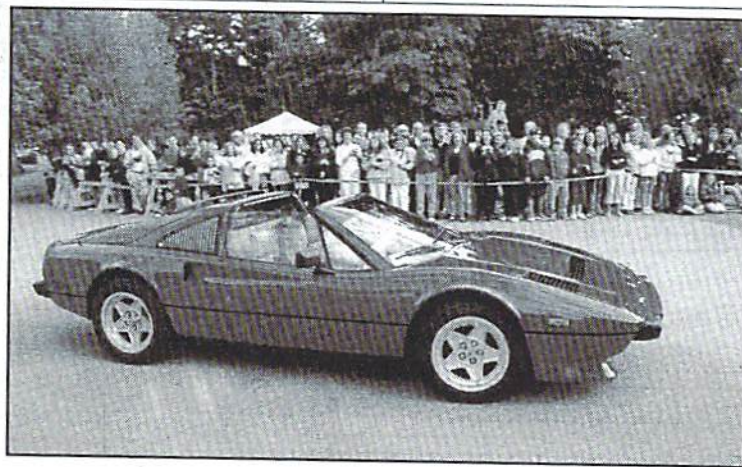
Although students in other towns create their own proms, it is the community spectacle which makes Duxbury unique. 1995 DHS graduate, Julie Herlihy, remembers helping decorate for the prom when she was in the fourth grade, "My whole family was in the gym helping to decorate the night before the prom," she said.

In addition to the preparation, the actual day has become an "event" in Duxbury. Dr.

prom."

In 1993, over 800 spectators gathered to watch the procession of students into the gymnasium. By 1994 the number of

golf cart and even a person-drawn Cinderella carriage. "It's stressful trying to think of something creative that hasn't been done before. This year



A knight in a shining Ferrari escorts his prom date.

spectators was over 1000.

The 1994 prom however, of-

we're taking a trolley, I know its been done, but it should be fun," said senior Meredith Kirtland.

And so the tradition continues in Duxbury. "I'm glad we have the prom here at the high school," Kirtland said. "It's nice to see everyone there and know we're being supported and that there's pride in our community."

"It's like our own little Academy Awards," said Herlihy. "I think it's really neat that the town takes pride in the school and the students. It's a very endearing and unique small-town tradition."



Devon Prescott, Kristen Crowley, Alison Diczno, and Kate Tighe enjoy "An Evening in Venice" in 1997.